

IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 -SSA General Meeting
- 2 -What is Your SSA Board Doing?
- 3 - SPUG Report
 - Williamson Act
 - CHP Meeting
 - MROSD General Manager
- 4 - Adopt a Highway
 - Lakeside Tax Measure
 - Lakeside Auction
- 5 - Violets
 - Native Plant Sale
- 6 - Hiking Russian Ridge
 - Highway 84 Report
- 7 - SMC Watershed Protection
- 8 - County Fire Budget
- 9 - Old Haul Road Bridge
 - Carbon Monoxide
 - La Honda Faire
- 10 - Bobcat Weather
 - CERT Training Locations
- 11 - Classified Ads
- 12 – SSA Calendar



Thomas Fogarty Winery

19501 Skyline Boulevard
2.7 miles north of Page Mill Rd.,
across from the entrance to
Yerba Buena Nursery

SSA Spring Quarterly General Meeting

Cats Are Not Peas:



A Calico History of Genetics

Guest Speaker – Laura Gould

Friday, April 18 at 7:00 pm

Thomas Fogarty Winery

Premiere Fogarty wines will be available. We request a donation of \$5.00 per glass.

Light hors d'oeuvres and soft drinks will be provided.

In 1984, Laura Gould and her husband Severo Ornstein decided to move to the western side of the Skyline, and purchased a 7.5-acre lot on Bear Gulch Road, with a nice view of the sea. In 1986 they moved into the house they had helped to build - and the rodents moved in as well. Without these vermin, her book *Cats Are Not Peas: A Calico History of Genetics* would never have been written (as explained in the Preface to its 1st edition):

My journey began in a brightly lighted garage where evidence of country mice was all too visible. Cats, we thought, we must get some cats - working cats who would patrol the property and keep the vermin at bay. A small and simple thought, reasonable and straightforward, easily implemented. Who could have foreseen its consequences?

In happy ignorance, we visited the local animal shelter and selected two kittens, George and Max, and the choice of George turned out to be the random event responsible for this lengthy odyssey; for George was a calico cat - a male calico cat - and calicos are invariably female. He was a genetic anomaly, a manifestation of something that isn't supposed to happen, a creature so rare that even most vets have never seen one.

Laura will read selections from the newly-released 2nd edition, which includes a lengthy Addendum on cloning and genetic sequencing, two new areas of research in which cats have had significant roles to play. She will also discuss what it means to write serious science starting from initial ignorance, and compare the different tactics used when doing research in libraries (as for the 1st edition) vs. staying at home and prowling the World Wide Web (as for the 2nd). All sorts of questions are welcomed.

Many thanks to the friendly folks at Thomas Fogarty Winery for once again hosting our spring meeting.

What Is Your SSA Board Doing?

By Secretary, Judy Grote

- The SSA January **General Meeting** was held on Saturday, January 26th at the Las Cumbres Community Center. Freddy Howell (“The Bird Lady and a resident bird expert”) was the featured speaker. The next SSA General Meeting on Friday, April 18th, at the Fogarty Winery will feature Laura Gould, who will talk about her new book.
- The January **Skylines Newsletter** was published to the Community and the next newsletter is being developed for distribution in April.
- **Traffic Safety and motorcycles** remains work in progress. A revised document was sent to Senator Simitian. They have reached a decision, and SSA should receive a letter in the next few weeks indicating the decision once it has been officially announced.
- **Caltrans/Trucks on 84:** Truck Advisory warning signs have been posted on Highways 35, 92, and 84, but not quite as requested. The sign positioning is being worked. Current focus is on what could be done to improve the 1) safety of the intersection between SR84 and Portola Road, and 2) two hairpin bends on the east slope of SR84 between Skylonda and Portola Road.
- **Rhys Vineyard and Winery:** A letter was sent by SSA to the Santa Clara County planning and Board of Supervisors concerning the traffic safety issue at the Rhys Vineyard & Winery. There has be no reply to date.
- **Fire-safe corridor along Skyline.** Caltrans will have the dead standing trees removed along all of Skyline and Hwy 9 by the beginning of the next fire season.
- **Fire-safe corridor on Old Haul Rd in Alpine-Portola Neighborhood.** The new bridge, which will make Old Haul Rd passable in case of emergencies, should be completed by September.
- **Wood Stoves, Fireplaces, and Air Quality:** The Board is sending a letter to the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) refocusing the problem to really being all the fireplaces in the valley and the need to replace them with EPA approved stoves as well as using seasoned wood. Focus will be on developers and new stoves.

The current SSA Board is as follows:

Name	Neighborhood	Board Responsibility
Patti Begley	Highway 9	Communications Committee; Skylines Editor
Barby Bergman	Crazy Pete's, Rocky Creek	Board Member
Ken Broome	Crazy Pete's, Rocky Creek	Vice President; Program Committee Chair; SSEPO President
Noelle Cosentino	Indian Rock Ranch	Board Member; interest in CHP managing the Motorcycle problem
Bo Gimbal	Highway 9	Treasurer; interest in Parks
Fred Glover	Southern part of Skyline	Board Member; interest in Land Use policies
Gary Gechlik	Highway 35	New Board Member
Judy Grote	Alpine-Portola	Secretary; Parks, Land Use policies; Fire Safety – Old Haul Rd Fire Safe Corridor
Hertha Harrington	Skylonda	Board Member; interest in Highway 84 traffic issues
Gary Heit	Mindego Hill	New Board Member
Larry Myers	Las Cumbres	President
Ivy Iverson	Las Cumbres	Board Member
Ruth Waldhauer	Portola Heights	Membership; SPUG; Communications; Adopt-a-Highway program; Hwy 35 Fire Safe Corridor



Quarterly Report

By Ruth Waldhauer

Skyline Propane Users Group (SPUG) was formed to benefit SSA members. **You must be a SSA member to qualify for the SPUG rate for propane.** For information about joining, or for members wishing current information on the agreement with Amerigas, please contact Ruth Waldhauer at ruth_waldhauer@yahoo.com, or 650-948-1466. Information is also available on our website at www.southskyline.org.

Recent SPUG prices are:

December	\$2.49/gallon
January	\$2.68
February	\$2.60
March	\$2.60

Unusual weather brought disruptions in deliveries here in the mountains. Now there is a shortage of propane from the refineries. Some customers are forced to wait a week or more for a delivery. Do what you can to conserve! The open market price is about \$1.00/gallon higher than the SPUG price.

Prices are subject to change as frequently as wholesale prices change. The prices we post are for the first of the month. Members 55 years of age or older qualify for a 2 cent/gallon discount in addition to the SPUG group price. Our SPUG rate is based on automatic regular route deliveries on a keep-full basis, not “will-call” service.

Those whose membership in SSA has lapsed will be disqualified from receiving the benefit of SPUG price for propane.

Stephen Abbors to Head MROSD

By Ruth Waldhauer

Stephen Abbors, a trained biologist and naturalist who currently manages 28,000 acres of watershed and recreational lands for the East Bay Municipal Utilities District (EBMUD), has been named the new General Manager for Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD). He is selected to succeed retiring General Manager Craig Britton.

“As the impacts of climate become more apparent, protection and restoration of the land that supports all life by providing air, water, food and other vital ecosystem services will become increasingly important to all of us,” he said. Abbors begins his new duties on April 14.

Update to Williamson Act

By Ruth Waldhauer

San Mateo County is updating their Land Conservation Act of 1965 program (aka Williamson Act) to comply with changes in State law and certain recommendations by the State Department of Conservation. As a result, San Mateo and other counties are now implementing a program by which it will verify that all lands subject to Williamson Act contracts are actually being put to commercial agricultural uses or special open space easements. The first step was asking property owners whose lands are currently covered by the Williamson Act to respond to a survey by March 19.

Many property owners have the benefit of lower taxes because of the Williamson Act, but their lands are not actually being put to commercial agricultural uses. Lands covered by the Williamson Act now must produce annual revenue of \$200/acre from farming.

It might be helpful to look at your property tax bill. If your property is removed from Williamson Act, the potential increase in property taxes only applies to the “Land” portion of your assessment, and not the “Improvements”. If you have owned the property for a long time, the “Land” part of the assessment is relatively small, and the difference in property taxes with or without Williamson Act is minor.

Property owners in San Mateo County can contact Terry Finn, Deputy Assessor, at 650-599-1271 or tfinn@smcare.org and ask him to let you know what the increase in taxes will be should you not qualify for the Williamson Act deduction under the new rules. It seems that the difference in taxes is not much. The longer you have owned the property, the less the difference.

Any tax increase will be phased in over a ten year period. For many the tax increase will not begin for the first four years of the ten.

Community Meeting with CHP

By Ruth Waldhauer

Captain Bridget Lott of Redwood City CHP will hold a meeting open to all in our community on Wednesday April 23 at 6 pm at the Skyline Field Office of MROSD. Motorcycle and bicycle safety enthusiasts, and emergency response people are all urged to attend.

Questions? Contact Ruth Waldhauer, ruth_waldhauer@yahoo.com or 650-948-1466

Skyline Adopt-A-Highway

By Ruth Waldhauer

On January 19, avid volunteers, Robert Bradford, Ken Smith, newly-weds Matt van de Rijn and Roanna Ueda, and I formed the crew.

Our March 8 volunteers were Carrol and Kelly Strain, Jane Manning and Deni De Ceuster, Ann Waldhauer, Robert Bradford and me. See the photos. Note: Ann Waldhauer took the March 8 photo to avoid being included.

Our Skyline area extends from Rapley Ranch Road to a little south of the Skyline Ranch Christmas Tree Farm.

So far there are 45 names on the Honor Role listing those who have participated, a few have been out more than once. We love to get new recruits. Please join us. You will find that it is very rewarding, perhaps even habit forming.

Volunteers are responsible for gathering litter every two months. The sweep takes about an hour and a half. A crew of 6 people is ideal. The next scheduled dates are May 3 and July 5. Please volunteer by contacting me at ruth_waldhauer@yahoo.com or 650-948-1466.

Skyline is our front yard!!! Let's keep it beautiful.

Lakeside School Parcel Tax Measure

Since 1881, Lakeside School has provided a great education for local students, right here in our mountain community. The small school environment allows students to receive individualized attention so they can succeed.

Yet due to uncertain state funding, many academic programs are facing budget cuts and the school's repair budget is shrinking. That is why the Lakeside School Board of Trustees is considering a parcel tax measure for the June 2008 ballot.

For more information contact Superintendent/Principal Bob Chrisman at 408-354-2372 or visit the website at www.lakesidelosgatos.org

Taxpayer Protections

- √ All parcel tax funds will support student achievement and repairs to the Lakeside School.
- √ The parcel tax will expire in six years and requires voter approval for renewal.
- √ No parcel tax funds can be spent on administrator salaries.
- √ Homeowners aged 65 and over can receive an exemption.



Robert Bradford, Matt van de Rijn, Roanna Ueda and Ken Smith



Ruth Waldhauer, Deni De Ceuster, Robert Bradford, Jane Manning, and Carrol and Kelly Strain

Lakeside School Annual Family Fun Day & Auction

Saturday, May 17, 2008

All the mountain community is invited!

Carnival Games

Food

Silent and Live Auctions

<http://www.lakesidelosgatos.org/>

Use Your Two Eyes to Spy Violets

By Sarah Schoen

Violet flowers have a distinctive shape familiar to all who know pansies. Of the 21 species of *Viola* native to California, 4 are found along greater Skyline.



Violets are herbaceous perennials, growing from a horizontal rootstock. Flowers have 5 stamen and 5 petals - 2 upper, 2 lateral, and 1 lower. The 2 upper and 2 lateral petals serve as flags to attract bee pollinators, the lower petal as a landing pad. The lower petal has a sack like spur at its base, containing nectar. The two lower stamen have wing like lobes

(nectaries) that go down into the spur. There are often nectar lines along the center front of the petals pointing the way in both the visible and UV spectra. In some species, contrasting color on the backs of the upper petals may also help to direct the bees around to the other side. The beards along the inner portions of the petals give bees something to hang on to while they go for the nectar. As the bee wriggles in to get a drink of nectar, she shakes loose some of the pollen grains from short stalked anthers. The pollen grains land on the hairs on her back for transport and pollination of another plant. Beards also help prevent rainfall and dew from running inside and diluting the nectar.

The seeds form in explosive 3-part capsules and are distributed by ants. The ants are attracted to the oils of a small protuberance on the seeds. After carrying the seeds to their nests, the ants eat the protuberance, but leave the seeds which are covered in a hard shell. The seeds, preplanted and protected from other larger animals that might eat them, have a better chance to germinate.

Johnny-jump-up or California golden violet (*V. pedunculata*) grows in masses in grasslands, such as Russian Ridge. The leaves are triangular, broader than long, with toothed margins. Long stems hold the bright yellow to yellow-orange flowers up above the level of at least some of the grass (*pedunculata* means long stem). The backs of the upper petals are maroon or brown, and the nectar lines on the front are brown to help direct the bees. Johnny-jump-ups also face the sun, keeping the nectar side bright and easier to see. In the late afternoon/evening, they turn back to where the sun will be the following morning. Johnny-jump-ups bloom from March to April.



Two-eyed violet, or western heart's ease (*V. ocellata*), grows in shady canyons along road edges and in forest openings. Leaves

are heart-shaped with toothed margins, growing basal and on the stem. Flowers have white petals with yellow in the middle and purple to red violet backs on the upper petals. There are also purple nectar guides on the lateral and bottom petals. The side petal nectar guides form two purple spots (*ocellata* means "with an eye"). Two-eyed violet blooms from March through June. The alternate name "heart's ease" may have come from the use of related European species either as a treatment for heart ailments or in love potions.

Evergreen or redwood violet (*V. sempervirens*) has prostrate evergreen stems which root at the nodes. Lemon yellow flowers have purple nectar guides. Upper and lateral petals point upward. Evergreen violets grow in the duff of redwood forests and bloom from February to August.

Stream or smooth yellow violet (*V. glabella*) has erect stems with lime green leaves and deep yellow flowers, but the backs of the upper 2 petals are not brown. There are purple nectar guides on the lower and lateral petals. Stream violets grow along wet stream banks and shaded forest edges and bloom from March to May.

Possibly because they grow in cool, dark places, evergreen and stream violets have a back up plan to insect pollination. Small un-opening flowers are capable of self-fertilization, should the early blooming flowers fail to attract a pollen-laden insect.

Violets are larval food plants of fritillary butterflies (*Speyeria* sp.). The larvae are not casually observed as they feed at night. One species in our area is crown fritillary, (*S. coronis*), whose adults take flight from May to June. After a mid summer diapause, females reappear in late summer and early fall, to lay their eggs.

Native Plant Sale

Saturday, April 12 10:00a to 3:00p
Hidden Villa Ranch
26870 Moody Rd
Los Altos Hills, CA

Purchase scores of species of native plants, seeds, and bulbs suitable for California gardens. Also find native plant books, posters, and note cards. Cash or check only. Free admission and free parking.

Organized by the Santa Clara Valley Chapter of the California Native Plant Society www.cnps-scv.org/

Take a Hike . . .



Russian Ridge

By Ruth Waldhauer

To the east spectacular views of San Francisco Bay and the Diablo Range, and to the west to the ocean over an expanse of ridges greet the visitor.

In early May, few spots in the Bay Area can compare with the profusion of the wild flower display here. DON'T MISS IT!!!

Park along Skyline at the CalTrans Vista Point, less than a mile north of the intersection with Page Mill/Alpine. Follow the trail/road for 0.5 miles to Borel Hill (2572'). Along the way the flower show begins with Clarkia, Tomcat Clover, and Blue Dicks. On a clear day from Borel Hill one can see the snow capped Sierra Nevada through the Sunol Gap to the east, and the Farralon Islands the west.

Follow the trail/road south for 0.2 miles through a display of Johnny-jump-ups, Poppies, Redmaids, and Goldfields. At the trail junction, turn west onto what was once the old Alpine Road (or what locals called "Jolly Hill" because it was not much fun to drive on that bumpy road). In 0.3 miles you will meet the Ancient Oaks Trail. Follow this through fields of blue Lupine. (Mostly yellow on the east side and the ridge and blue on the west - amazing!) After 0.3 miles turn right (east) back to the main trail. Along the way, and when you turn left for the trail back to the parking lot, Tidy-tips will greet you along with the calls of Western Meadowlarks.

Total mileage for this route is about 2.1 miles. Trail maps are available at the trail head. For stunning photos of Russian Ridge in flower, visit www.virtualparks.org. For a complete list of wild flowers visit www.nrdp.org, then choose: checklist, then flora, and preserve.

Traffic Safety Highway 84 – Interim Report

By Hertha Harrington and Ken Broome

Following the near fatal accident to South Skyline resident Jim Sanderson recently, when an extra long truck-trailer crossed over the double yellow line at one of the hairpin bends on SR84 between Skylonda and Woodside and overtopped his Porsche, South Skyline Association Board members Hertha Harrington, Ruth Waldhauer and Ken Broome were asked to explore ways to prevent any such serious safety violations in the future.

Previous to the above mentioned accident, the only warning sign on SR84 was posted on the east side of I-280 advising truck drivers that trailers longer than 30 ft from kingpin to rear

axle were not recommended to proceed further. They were not prohibited.

Three alternatives were investigated:

- Prohibition of extra-long truck-trailers. This would require the local authority having jurisdiction of that portion of SR84 (either the Town of Woodside, or San Mateo County) to make an official request to CALTRANS. Such a move would probably raise opposition from the California Truckers Association and require a sustained expenditure of time and political "capital". The outcome would be problematic and might even be opposed by residents.
- Additional warning signs closer to the dangerous curves. CALTRANS regulations require that signs must be located no closer than the nearest alternative route or turning point. SSA requested that new signs be posted on SR84 just before Canada Road in Woodside; on either side of SR 35 at its intersection with SR84 in Skylonda; on SR92 before its intersection with SR35, Skyline Blvd; and on SR1 at the intersection with SR84. CALTRANS has now placed all of these signs. SSA had requested one more sign at the intersection of Woodside Road (SR84) and Tripp Road where there is space for a long truck to turn around. This sign is still under discussion.
- Construction of physical improvements to widen the pavement at the SR84 hairpin bends to permit use by long tractor trailers without encroaching on the opposite traffic lane. At a meeting with the CALTRANS Traffic Safety representative recently, SSA was told that there was enough width on the shoulders at the upper of the two hairpin bends to widen the pavement, separate the two lanes by two double yellow lines and warning studs. This will be done either by a CALTRANS crew within six months or by a competitive bid contract within two years. The lower bend is more restricted by a steep bank and the limited width of the existing earthwork formation. However, relocation of the lane markers may be possible by CALTRANS crews within the six month period.

Discussions were held with the Town Manager of Woodside and representatives of other local property owners associations, all of whom were in favor of improving traffic safety on SR84 and were supportive of SSA's approach. Members of the SSA Traffic Safety Committee will monitor further developments and advise the membership of progress in later issues of *Skylines*.

San Mateo County Watershed Protection Outreach

By Judy Grote

The goal of this article is to educate the community on what the County is planning as relates to Watershed Protection--Why San Mateo County thinks it needs a Watershed Protection Strategy.

The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors directed staff to develop and implement a public outreach **process** on watershed protection. The goals of this outreach process are to 1) raise public awareness of the watershed program and perceived watershed problems, and 2) discuss and gather possible alternative recommendations for actions to lessen human impact on the County's watersheds.

The goal of the **program** is to have a consistent set of regulations across the county with which to address watershed improvement and human activity relative to watershed areas. The county would like to be proactive in managing it from a county perspective rather than having to react to new state and/or federal regulations as they come down. What wasn't clear was how this would pre-empt the county from having to enforce any new federal and state regulations pertinent to watersheds as well as the new county ones. This could result in layers of bureaucracy dealing with human activity relative to these watershed areas. The scope of the program is the unincorporated county.

The proposed **process** will gather possible recommendations for action. The workshops where the information will be gathered occur in 2 rounds—one which began in February and the 2nd, which is slated for June, so there will be opportunity to input further. Meeting dates/times/locations, the issue paper, county watershed data, and possible recommendations for action are/will be posted at the website. As additional information becomes available, it will be posted on the County's website www.co.sanmateo.ca.us/OurWatersheds.

The moderator made it clear that internally they (WRCS) have worked on this for years. They just started meetings with the public this year. The moderator also stated that some meetings had already taken place, and that one of the recommendations was to make the new regulations retroactive.

The workshop the writer attended was held in Pescadero and hosted by PMAC. There were about 25-30 people in attendance.

The workshop taskforce (WRCS) started out with a presentation of watershed issues and concerns derived from a Berkeley study (study of 4 counties on the coast side and suggestions to make the watersheds better), which will be posted to the county website according to the moderator. What followed was a discussion of the current and proposed state and federal regulations protecting the watersheds, watershed term definitions, and some possible options to deal with the identified issues. The data to support the presentation was not presented or discussed at the meeting, so hopefully it will be posted to the website.

There are changes to the Federal and State regulations that will require the county to act. These include the Endangered Species Act listings (Coho salmon, Steelhead trout, Tiger salamander, and Red-legged frog), the Federal Clean Water Act, and SWRCB (State Water Resources Control Board) National Pollutant Discharge and Elimination System Permit, the latter mandating low impact development practices to reduce impervious surfaces and implementation of a Stream and Wetland Protection Policy. The requirement is to minimize erosion into the watershed. The new regulations will be more restrictive than those that exist today. This may/will make it harder to get water from the creek. The goal is to try to minimize development to lessen the impact to water quality.

One of the problems today is that definitions are not consistent across the different watersheds. This means there can be different regulations for each neighborhood. For example, what is a wetland? Where is the top of the bank?

Salient questions that came up during the meeting are as follows.

- Is this program really only unincorporated county? If so, how do we make sure that others outside of the unincorporated county don't have more say than those actually affected?
- The moderator pointed out that this would be looked at from Highway 35 West. Why not take this from Highway 35 East first?
- How many agencies will want to have a discussion and say in this? Who are these agencies?
- What is the impact if we do nothing and just leave the current county water regulations that are in place now?
- Why do we need more water regulations when there are so many in place right now? This will make it harder for everyone. The county keeps ceding its authority to the Feds anyway.
- Why not make incentives be the way to do this rather than more regulations?
- How will additional staff required to support the program, process, and regulations be funded?
- How will the final recommendations be arrived at?
- Has anyone checked the data and results from the Berkeley study? It's just one study.
- How was the data quantified? It says on one of the slides that no bayside creeks are/were monitored, so where does the data come from?
- How will this impact Riparian Rights? For those currently having them? For those who have applications in the queue? For those applying for them?

(Continued on Page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

San Mateo County Watershed Protection Outreach

- What is the definition of sediment impairment?
- You state that studies show that 80% of the pollution entering San Francisco Bay comes from polluted runoff. Where is the data to support that? If we don't have common definitions, then what is the agreed definition of garbage and how does that get factored into the data? Is garbage soda pop cans, refrigerators, or...?
- The county says it is seeing issues caused by the septic systems. What has the county done with the GPS data on septic systems collected within the past 5-10 years? How have they used it? How has the data made the septic situation better?

Possible options suggested in the presentation and what we all need to think about are:

- Should the county take any action on watershed issues? If so, then should these actions be retroactive? Should property not being either changed or in the process of change be grandfathered in?
 - Adopt an ordinance or other program
 - Take no action (current enforcement will continue)
 - Wait and adopt something later
 - Recommendation on other options/ideas?
- What are the 'critical activities' that most impact watersheds?
 - Activities near streams
 - Activities on hillsides
 - What happens outside the stream that impacts the stream?
 - Are regulations sufficient to mitigate erosion impacts?
 - Recommendation on other options/ideas?
- What is a 'stream'? Should the scope focus on natural waterways or include man-made too? For example,
 - Perennial and intermittent streams
 - Mapped or unmapped
 - Man-made channel
 - Irrigation and drainage ditches
- Should Riparian policies in the LCP be made standard for use on the bayside?
 - We might want to understand what the Riparian policies are in the LCP first.

Audience comments were:

- Trying to come up with a broad brush approach will not work for our creeks and streams. Why not have urban and rural definitions because

urban and rural areas typically don't have the same problems?

- Focus on the big picture. What is needed on the coast is water storage given the set of problems faced there during the different seasons.
- The data needs to be posted to the website so people can review it to better understand the real problems and make recommendations that will work for urban v. rural watershed areas.
- Try to do this through incentives, rather than through more regulations.

Please visit the San Mateo County website to educate yourselves more on this issue in preparation for the June meetings. Suggestions may be submitted via the website. Further updates to the website will be made from now until the June meetings.

County Fire Budget Update

By George Johnson

I was able to attend the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors meeting on February 12, 2008 and have some news on the County fire budget and station closing. It was decided that all four of the Santa Cruz County fire stations (Saratoga Summit, Loma Prieta, Corralitos, and Big Creek) will remain open. Cost reduction for the balance of this winter season (from now until when fire season starts in May or June) will be in staff reduction. At times there will be 2 paid staff on a fire engine instead of the current 3 paid staff.

Thank you to all that sent a note to your Supervisor on this matter. Supervisor Stone, for one, expressed his opposition to any station closing. Several people attending the meeting spoke to express their support for the option that was approved.

Below is the option County Fire and county staff recommended and that the board unanimously approved.

Option 5b. Staffing Hybrid 2: Maintain 4 fire stations with a minimum 2 person engine staffing on 3 days per week, and 3 person staffing on 4 days per week, and increase staffing on engines to 3-persons as County Fire and CAL FIRE resources permit.

Please note that the next budget period, 2008/2009, starts July 1, 2008 and may need to have additional cost reductions as no new fund increases are anticipated. County Fire, County staff, and the Fire Department Advisory Commission (FDAC) are already working on this. Letting your Supervisors know your feeling on this subject is also important.

Alpine-Portola Neighborhood: Old Haul Rd Bridge Update

By Judy Grote

It has been over 3 years since the bridge joining Old Haul Rd across Pescadero Creek was washed out. At long last it seems that this will be rectified in 2008. What this means is that the residents along Portola State Park Rd and those in Middleton Tract as well as Park personnel and campers/day use users will have an escape route in case of fire or any other emergencies/disasters which come from Skyline down Alpine and cut off escape via Alpine Rd.

Current status, according to Mary Hazel who is the managing ranger for Portola Redwoods State Park and Castle Rock State Park, is that the contract with the Contractor firm should be signed in April 2008 at the latest and the bridge should be completed by September 2008. The other bridges which seem out are really seasonal bridges and should be restored prior to Portola Redwood State Park opening for camper use in May. Area residents will be confirming this through their hikes.

Portola Redwoods State Park in Danger of Closing

Currently, Portola Redwoods State Park is on the Governor's list of 48 state parks to be closed. It is unlikely that the park will be closed before September given all the camping reservations made through the State Park reservation system. Since the Old Haul Rd bridge project is being partially funded by FEMA grant money, the project may not be cancelled. The State does not like to lose FEMA grant funds.

However, we cannot take the above for granted. What is needed is to keep the pressure on so the project gets completed. This means we need a letter writing campaign to the Governor, your state legislators, and the California State Parks Foundation to keep the park open. What we don't want is to have this project stopped because the park is on the endangered parks list. While the SSA Board can write a letter representing the Community and will do this, it is the letters from individuals in the community that **let our elected representatives know how important this is to the safety of our community**. Below are some websites which will help make all this a little easier.

- Write a letter to your assembly member and senator: http://ga3.org/campaign/KeepStateParksOpen_clone?source=ssp A letter template, which you can edit, is provided at this location and it will be sent to the appropriate assembly member and senator based on the letter writer's address.
- Contact the Santa Cruz Mountains Sector Acting District Superintendent
Chet Bardo - Acting District Superintendent
303 Big Trees Park Rd.
Felton, CA 95018
- Involve others in the campaign to save the parks
http://ga3.org/campaign/KeepStateParksOpen_clone/forward?source=ssp

Carbon Monoxide

Submitted by George Johnson

This article points out a good safety reminder that is relevant to our community especially this time of year.

LAFAYETTE, Tenn. (AP) - Authorities say a Macon County man has died from carbon monoxide poisoning by a generator he was using to power his storm-damaged home.
<http://www.knoxnews.com/news/2008/feb/08/man-using-generator-storm-damaged-home-dies-poison/>

Carbon monoxide is colorless, odorless and tasteless and mixes evenly with the air. It enters your bloodstream through the lungs and displaces the oxygen your body needs. Early symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning - irritated eyes, headache, nausea, weakness, and dizziness - are often confused with sickness or intoxication. **Prolonged exposure to low concentrations or very short exposure to high concentrations can lead to death.**

Related link:

http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/citizens/all_citizens/co/

La Honda Faire and Music Festival June 14 & 15 2008

Musicians, artists and craftspeople will join together in La Honda to entertain and exhibit at the annual La Honda Faire and Music Festival, June 14 & 15th, 2008, 10:00 am - 6:00 pm. The Faire is held in La Honda Gardens, in the California redwoods of La Honda. It is a two-day festival of arts, crafts, music, celebration and community. Admission is Free.

<http://www.lahondafaire.org/>

Bobcat Weather

by Georgia Stigall

You won't find this weather phenomenon described in textbooks or government websites, but it's as real and predictable as summer storms over the Sierra Nevada.



I call it "Bobcat Weather" and it's particularly applicable to our local grasslands.

The short of it, is that after rain when soil is moist and the sun is shining, it's only a matter of minutes or a few hours before a bobcat (*Lynx rufus*) appears. This is because the bobcats know that these conditions result in surface activity by gophers (and less often, moles).

Bobcats are described in the literature as nocturnal, but more diurnal in winter months. This certainly fits in with the concept of Bobcat Weather, which requires sunshine. I do observe bobcats during the day throughout all but the hottest weather conditions, and attribute that to the abundance of prey species (any local gardener would probably agree there are many gophers in our region!).

To prepare for Bobcat Weather, I suggest keeping a camera and binoculars handy. Patience helps as well!

I have spent considerable amounts of time watching bobcats watching gopher holes. And when the bobcat is lucky and the gopher not, the subsequent stages: Stalking, pouncing, capture, consumption.

After which, as anyone who has lived with housecats has observed, a thorough and meticulous grooming. Nap optional, depending on the circumstances.

I'm fortunate to be able to take photographs through blinds from inside, so that I don't affect the animals' behavior. I have placed some photographs online for those who wish to see them (warning to those who may be squeamish!): <http://www.flickr.com/photos/bobcatweather/>

Any research of a predator species is made far more interesting by also researching their prey species. Rather than turn this into a multi-paged document, I'll recommend learning more about the relationship between *Lynx rufus* and "Botta's Pocket Gopher" (*Thomomys bottae*) for those who may be interested.

Bobcats also prey on brush rabbit (*Sylvilagus bachmani*) which is another fascinating opportunity for research and a better understanding of our local ecology.

To create checklists of local fauna (and flora) species, I recommend the Natural Resources Database at <http://www.nrdp.org>.

CERT Training is Available in Local Cities

Submitted by Barclay Slade

Following a major disaster, first responders who provide fire and medical services may not be able to meet the demand for these services and people will have to rely on each other for help in order to meet their immediate life saving and life sustaining needs.

That's why the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) concept was developed and implemented by the Los Angeles City Fire Department in 1985. The CERT course will train individuals to respond to and cope with the aftermath of a disaster. Below are a couple of local agencies that provide CERT training.

La Honda Fire CERT

Point of Contact: Larry Lawson, (650) 747-0381, larrylawson@earthlink.net

Website: <http://www.lahondafire.org>

La Honda NEST provides a broad range of emergency services to the local community and in support of the volunteer fire fighters.

Woodside

Point of contact: Gaylynn Mann, (650) 851-1594, gmann@woodsidefire.org

Website: <http://www.CERPP.org>

CERPP is a community based program supported by the Town of Portola Valley, Town of Woodside, and the Woodside Fire Protection District. Courses in CPR, First Aid, Emergency Responder, Light Search and Rescue, and Fire Suppression are offered free to residents living in the jurisdiction of the fire protection district.

Town of Los Gatos and City of Monte Sereno

Point of Contact: Sgt. Harris, (408) 354-8600, kharris@town.los-gatos.ca.gov

Website: <http://cert@town.los-gatos.ca.gov>

The 20 hour CERT program is designed to prepare community members to protect themselves and their neighbors in the event of a disaster; and to enhance community disaster response services.

City of Cupertino

Point of Contact: Marsha Hovey, (408) 777-3335, CERT@Cupertino.org

Website: <http://www.cupertino.org/emergency>

The program is designed to be a fun, hands-on learning experience for people of all ages. The course is offered at least five times per year.

Many more cities in the South Bay Area offer CERT courses. For more locations, go to the Citizen Corps website at: www.citizencorps.gov/cc/searchCert.do?submitByZip

Classified Ads

WANTED

Woodstove, medium or small sized.
Potbellied or other.
Lpenek@hotmail.com or 408-314-0375
to leave message.

SERVICES

Alice's Restaurant
Four Corners on Skyline
Locally owned and operated
8:30AM-9:00PM daily; 7:00PM
(Tuesday) (650) 851-0303

**Fun, Positive and Effective Dog
Training** classes at Woodland School in
Ladera. Comfortable class size plus
individual help. Private lessons and
other related services are also
available. Call (650) 851-5500,
mailbox 4 for more information.

Georgia's Homesewns:
Grocery/garden/utility bags & more.
Go to www.CoastalSeams.com or
650-941-1068

SERVICES

Karin Bird and Scott Hayes are
pleased to announce their recent
affiliation with **Alain Pinel** Realtors of
Woodside. This relationship allows us
to keep our mountain-top presence of
over 20 years at the "4-Corners" and
leverage Alain Pinel's outstanding
marketing support, additional locations
to serve potential buyers and extensive
online presence. Thank you for your
support over the years and we look
forward to serving your real estate needs
in the future.

We currently have qualified Buyers
actively looking for homes and land in
the area. If you are considering selling,
please give us a call at 650-851-8100 or
email Karin at Karin@BirdHayes.com or
Scott at Scott@BirdHayes.com. If you
are interested in how our micro market
faired this year, please visit
www.birdhayes.com and listen to our
podcast.

Residential Design Country & urban
custom houses, remodel and additions.
20 years experience in California.
Taruno Vega 650-747-0654
taruno@coastside.net

SERVICES


Skyline Broadband Service

1 Mbps symmetrical broadband is now
available in the South Skyline area.
<http://SkylineBroadbandService.com>
650-917-9279

The Mountain Terrace
Charming and rustic atmosphere,
uniquely suited to your special occasion.
Now available for private events and
Sunday brunch (650) 851-1606

FREE

Free fire fitting. This fitting will allow
the connection of a fire hose to your
water supply and can be utilized by the
fire department to access the water
necessary for fire suppression. South
Skyline Fire and Rescue,
George 408-354-1401



SSA Calendar

General Meeting – April 18,
Thomas Fogarty Winery

Business Meetings at 7:15 pm:

Thurs. April 10

Thurs. May 8

Thurs. June 12

(Call Larry Myers for location and directions)

President Larry Myers 408-354-5830

Editor Patti Begley 408-867-3973

Join SSA Today

For just \$15 a year, your membership dues to the South Skyline Association will provide the funds to publish the Skylines newsletter, offer free classified ads, eligibility for SPUG, and provide speakers for our general meetings. Send your dues to:

SSA Membership Chairperson
22400 Skyline Blvd. Box 35
La Honda, CA 94020

Membership forms can be found on
www.southskyline.org.

Policy on Classified Ads: Ads are free to SSA members. No continuing ads will be accepted. They must be resubmitted for each issue. Deadline date for ads for the July issue will be July 1, 2007.

Skylines News Articles: The deadline for submitting articles for the next issue is June 15, 2007.

Send all ads and articles to: Patti Begley c/o 22400 Skyline Blvd #35, La Honda CA 94020, or SkylinesEditor@earthlink.net, 408-867-3973
We reserve the right to edit all submissions. We assume no responsibility for omissions, incorrect information or personal opinions.